

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claims 1-20 have been cancelled herein without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 21-40 have been added. All of the pending claims 21 through 40 are presented below. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application. Please enter these claims as amended.

Listing of Claims:

1.-20. (Canceled)

21. (New) A snowboard binding including:
a binding base having a front end and a rear end;
an aperture in said binding base intermediate said front and rear ends for receiving a snowboard
engaging member adapted to releasably secure said binding base to the snowboard, the
perimeter of said aperture including at least one pair of adjacent points adapted for
relative movement; and
separation means to selectively space said adjacent points to loosen said board engaging member
to enable said binding base to be moved relative to said board engaging means.

22. (New) The snowboard binding according to claim 21, wherein said separation means includes an actuator operably connected to said binding base, wherein, upon operation of said actuator, the perimeter of said aperture is varied to enable said binding base to be moved relative to said snowboard engaging member from a first position and to be re-engaged in a second position.

23. (New) The snowboard binding according to claim 22, wherein said separation means includes space variation means operable to vary the space between said adjacent points between a closed, fixed position and an open, adjustment position.

24. (New) The snowboard binding according to claim 23, wherein said space variation means includes an over centre or cam mechanism capable of being shifted by operation of a lever from a closed position to an open position to vary the space between said adjacent points.

25. (New) The snowboard binding according to claim 23, wherein said space variation means includes a space variation rod which extends between opposed edges of said binding base defining the separation spacing said adjacent points said space variation rod anchored to a portion of said binding base remote front said actuator.

26. (New) The snowboard binding according to claim 21, wherein said adjacent points are interposed by a separation defined by adjacent or opposed edges of said binding base, wherein said separation is in the form of a gap.

27. (New) The snowboard binding according to claim 26, wherein said gap extends through the binding base in a generally outward direction relative to the centre of the aperture so that said gap is continuous from the aperture to the outside of the binding base.

28. (New) The snowboard binding according to claim 21, wherein said aperture is circular and said board engaging member is disc shaped, the respective surfaces of the aperture wall the rim of said snowboard engaging member having surface features which are operable to complementarily engage in a fixed position.

29. (New) The snowboard binding according to claim 21, wherein said binding base has a plate structure that is substantially planar in shape, said snowboard binding further including reinforcing means extending across the separation spacing said adjacent points to stabilize the binding plate structure.

30. (New) The snowboard binding according to claim 29, wherein said reinforcing means is a rigid elongate member aligned generally parallel to said space variation means.

31. (New) The snowboard binding according to claim 30, wherein said reinforcing means is anchored to said binding base associated with one of said adjacent points and is slidable in a bore associated with the other of said adjacent points.

32. (New) The snowboard binding according to claim 30, wherein said reinforcing means is slidable in coaxial bores associated with opposed said adjacent points, wherein said reinforcing means is slidably trapped within the confines of said opposed coaxial bores.

33. (New) The snowboard binding according to claim 21, wherein said binding base includes a substantially planar plate defining said aperture, the sole of the snowboard boot directly or indirectly resting in use on said planar plate, said planar plate including a toe section extending across the front of said planar plate and a heel section extending across the rear of said planar plate, respectively forward and rearward of the substantially vertical binding side structures, said adjacent points relatively movably separated by the separation spacing said adjacent points, said separation located in at least said toe section.

34. (New) The snowboard binding according to claim 21, wherein the separation spacing said adjacent points comprises a gap defined by opposed edges of said binding base extending between said aperture and the periphery of said binding base in continuous spaced relationship.

35. (New) The snowboard binding according to claim 21, wherein the separation spacing said adjacent points comprises an incomplete cut, wherein the connected portion of the toe or heel section of said binding base acts as a hinge.

36. (New) The snowboard binding according to claim 35, wherein said hinge includes a hinged joint in the form of an axial bolt located in substantially vertical coaxial bores of overlapping portions of the opposed portions of said heel section.

37. (New) The snowboard binding according to claim 21, wherein the rim of said snowboard engaging member, or at least a portion thereof, is lined by a compressible surface material to

provide means for high frictional engagement with the aperture, the compressible surface feature comprising said compressible surface material enabling an infinite number of rotated potential positions to be adopted by said snowboard binding.

38. (New) The snowboard binding according to claim 21, wherein the rim of said snowboard engaging member is lined with circumferentially spaced contact portions and the spaces between said contact portions are filled to resist ingress of snow and ice, said contact portions comprising surfaces that extend slightly proud of a generally circular external surface of said snowboard engaging member.

39. (New) A snowboard binding having a binding base with a front end and a rear end and an aperture in said binding base intermediate said front and rear ends for receiving a snowboard engaging member adapted to releasably secure said binding base to the snowboard, the perimeter of said aperture including at least one pair of adjacent points adapted for relative movement, said adjacent points located either side of a gap, wherein the widening of said gap enables said binding base to be moved relative to said snowboard engaging member.

40. (New) A method of modifying a snowboard binding having an aperture to engage an engaging member of a snowboard, said method including the step of:
removing a portion of the base of said binding to create a gap extending generally radially outwardly from a board engaging member aperture,
wherein the perimeter of said aperture includes a pair of adjacent points, wherein one of said adjacent points is on each side of said gap, and wherein said gap is capable of being widened to increase the size of said aperture to enable said binding to be moved relative to said snowboard engagement means for removal, replacement or adjustment from or relative to said snowboard.